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THE OBSERVATOR.

The Country-man's *Vindication of himself. Of Honour. Of* French *Bravery.*

From **Saturday** January the 20th, to **Wednesday** January the 24th, 1705.

Country-m. MAfter *Obſervator*, a Man told me at *London*, that there was ſomething in a Paper, called *The Weekly Review*, relating to my ſelf, and ſo I e'en went and Bought the Paper. Pray, Sir, do ſo much as ſee what Mr. *Review* has to ſay againſt Honeſt *Roger*.

Obſ. Ho, I have found it already; 'Tis not Mr. *Review* that Picks a Quarrel with you, 'tis a Letter of a Friend of Count *Tallards*, that Accuſes you of Ill Manners, in calling Count *Tallard* an Aſs.

Country-m. Look'ye, Maſter, I am no Courtier, I am a Clumſie ſort of a Fellow, and don't know how to make my Haviours; and tho' I have no Manners, I have as much Breeding as any of 'em. Now, I'll tell you what, tho' I call'd Maſter *Tallard* Aſs, if he will come to my Houſe, I'll give him a couple of Barn-Door Fowls, and a good Piece of Beef and Pudding, and his Skin full of *October*; and I would then perſwade him to be an Aſs no longer, for at preſent he is ſo.

Obſ. How do'ſt make it out? You are upon your Juſtification.

Country-m. Every *French-man* is an Aſs, and therefore he is an Aſs.

Obſ. This is Darker yet. 'Tis a ſtrange ſort of Logick thou mak'ſt uſe of.

Country-m. I will clear up the Point then. An Aſs is a Beaſt of Burthen, and ſo is a Slave a Beaſt of Burthen: But Count *Tallard* and the other General Officers are Slaves, therefore they are Aſſes.

Obſ. At this Rate, in a little time, you'll Learn to make Sylogiſms. But ſince you are enclin'd to be a fair Diſputant, I muſt ſtand in Count *Tallards* Place, and ſo I deny your whole Argument, both *Major*, *Minor* and *Concluſion*.

Country-m. I amn't Talking of Majors, I am Talking of General Officers: But, Maſter, before I proceed any further in this Argument, I muſt deſire you to tell me whether you had any of the Piſtoles Count *Tallard* brought with him the time before when he was in *London?*

Obſ. Not one *Souz* of *French* Money in all my Life.

Country-m. I believe the Man that ſent the Letter to Mr. *Review* had ſome of 'em. But to the Point: I am to prove, it ſeems, that a Slave is an Aſs. Now, Maſter, you know that an Aſs is the moſt Fooliſh and Blockiſh of any ſort of Beaſts, and you know, in *England*, I don't care what they do or ſay in *France*, that we often call a Fool an Aſs. I don't know by what Figure of Rhetorick 'tis, nor do I care, for I love Plain Speaking and Plain Writing.

Now I am to prove, in the next place, that a Slave is a Fool, or according to the Propriety of *Engliſh* Country Language, that he is an Aſs. And certainly he is a Fool, an Aſs, a Blockhead: What ſort of Infatuated Creature is he not, that being born Free, will tamely ſubmit to Vaſſalage and Stoop, like the Aſs, to take up every Burthen that a Tyrant will lay on his Back? We have another Creature, a Bird known and Diſtinguiſh'd by the Name of an Owl, and looks as much like a *Frenchman* as can be, only one wears a Bob-Periwig, and the other a long one: Why, this is a Fooliſh Bird, and we commonly call a Fool an Owl, and yet none of theſe *Engliſh* Owls will put themſelves into Cages; ſo that I think a *French* Slave is much more a Stupid Aſinine Creature, than any that follows the Dictates of meer Nature.

For, look'ye, Maſter, if you Whip an Aſs he'll Kick at you; if you go to pull off the Head of an Owl he'll Squeeze your Hands with his Tallons: All Creatures are for Self-Preſervation, and will uſe what Weapons Nature has given them in their own Defence; but this a *French* Slave will not do, and therefore he is one Degree beneath a Beaſt.

Nay, a Brute Beaſt will take all Opportunities to ſhake off the Yoke of Bondage, and Eaſe himſelf of his Burthen, as I have ſomewhere or other found an Inſtance in Story. An Aſs, the Creature we are now ſpeaking of, was heavily Loaded with Salt, his Driver put him into a River, over which he was to paſs, while the Driver went over the Bridge; the Aſs being in the midſt of the Water, lies down with his Burthen, then riſes, then lies down, then riſes again, and that ſo often, till by Melting the Salt he had Exonerated himſelf.

Obſ. Thou art a Pickled Fellow.

Country-m. But Count *Tallard* and the other *French* Generals have not ſo much Wit, nor ſuch a Senſe of Liberty and Slavery, as had this Aſs; they Venture Life and Limb; they Fight in the Cauſe of their Tyrant, only to Enable him to lay Heavier Burthens on their Backs; they Rob other People of their Countries, to make the Inhabitants as great Slaves as themſelves; they are but Aſſes in a better ſort of Harneſs than the reſt, and for all their fine Trappings they are Abſolute Slaves, their Bodies, their Eſtates, their Wives and Families are at the Diſpoſal of their Tyrant; and then, I am ſure, that Man is an Aſs himſelf that ſays otherwiſe of them.

Obſ. But that Letter to Mr. *Review* ſays they are Men of Honour, and therefore you ought not to ſpeak ſo ſlightingly of them, and ſo much like a Country Clown.

Country-m. I'm ſure he's an Aſs that expects me to ſpeak contrary to my Nature and my Education. I don't underſtand Honour, that is, the Honour you mean: I drive my Plough and my Cart as Honourably as any Man; I Pay my Landlord's Rent, and the Queens Taxes, as

Honourably

Honourably as any Body; and you and I every Evening do Drink Her Majesties Health very Honourably. Now, I think, Honour and Honesty are inseparable Companions, and one is never found in any Man without the other. The Author of the Letter sent to Mr. *Review*, may say that Count *Tallard* is an Honourable Person, in Commanding the Slavish Army of his Master in all their Ravages and Bloodshed, and in the Robbing of Innocent People of their Countries; but I say there is not one bit of Honesty in all this, and therefore there can be no Honour in it. Honour is consummate Virtue, and has a Natural Tendency to what is Just and Right; what they call Honour now a days differs as much from true Honour, as does the Tinsel on a *Bartholomew* Baby, from the real Gold on a Ladies Petticoat. Every Man that will Fight is not a Man of Honour, the Honour lies in the Cause, and the Disposition of the Heroes Heart to the Action. If a Man Fights only to get a great Name, without any Considerations of the Common Good; his End and Design being Wrong, whatever he gets can never be true, because it flows from the Corrupt Fountain of Ambition and Vain-Glory. If a Man Fights like a Tyger in any Cause, such as is the *French* Kings, which never was good, will you call this Courage and Honour? No, 'tis but Fool Hardiness, and a Bull-Dog Bravery, a Violent Motion of Nature, without the Conduct of Reason: A Butchers Dog will assist his Master in Killing a Grazier, or in Stealing his Sheep: Is this therefore a Dog of Honour? Just such Honourable Persons are the *French* Generals: As the Cause make the Martyr, so the Cause makes the Man of Honour, and nothing else.

Now, Master, I don't care if these Admirers of *French* Honour call me Country Bumpkin and Clown, and say I don't treat Gentlefolk Genteely. I was not bred to Gentility, but I have as much Honesty as any of them; I can't Scrape and Cringe, and Complement, tell Lies, and forswear my self at every Word, but I speak the Truth of every Body, and wish I could speak the whole Truth; nor do I think my self Rude or Ungenteel in calling Count *Tallard* Ass; our Forefathers have said as much, and so often that's even become a Maxim in *England*, if not in other Countries. 'Tis not long ago I was looking into one of your Old Authors, where, giving a Description of the Kings of *Europe* and their Subjects, he says, *That the King of* England *is King of Men, but the* French *King is King of Asses.* Now I lay this down as a Fundamental Principle, and from it I form this Argument. If the *French* King be King of Asses, and Count *Tallard* be one of the *French* Kings Subjects, than Count *Tallard* is an Ass.

Obj. Thou'lt chop more Logick than Pot-herds in a little Time. I must needs say thou hast made a pretty good Defence for thy self; but what will be the Consequence of it, I can't tell. Suppose Count *Tallard* should give thee a Challenge.

Country m. I don't fear him; he with his Sword and I with my Flayl.

Obs. Indeed, Honest *Country-man*, I never could find the Measures of *French* Honour so as to reconcile them to common Reason or common Honesty; can there be any thing more Dishonourable, than to assist a Tyrant in the Arbitrary Executions of his own Will and Pleasure, to assist him in Massacres and Murders, in Publick and Private Piracies? Is there any Honour in all this? Can there be Honour, where there is no Faith, no Humanity, no Conscience, nor so much as Natural Affection? Is there the least Sign of Honour and Generosity in one that Executes the Commands of the most Barbarous Tyrant? If this can be, then you may find it in a *French* General.

The Author of that Letter might have let alone his Complement to the *French* Generals in Respect to their Bravery in Fighting, for their Master, who is such a Master as no Man of Honour or Bravery would fight for; and the late Action at *Hocksted* did not so much discover their Bravery, as to allow them Encomiums; they were lamentably Beaten, that's certain, and that by an Inferiour Number of our Troops, and those fatigu'd with long Marches. The Memory of Man cannot produce a Parallel Instance of such a vast Carnage of Men kill'd on the Spot, nor such vast Numbers of Generals, and other Officers, with Common Soldiers, and Ensigns of War taken at one time; no Man, indeed, can answer for the Fate of War, but those that would Magnifie *French* Bravery must give us some other Instance, than that at *Hocksted*, where the best Squadrons were push'd into the *Danube*, and chose rather to be Drowned, than to Face the Enemy and kill or be kill'd. This, I say, is but an Indifferent Instance of *French* Bravery; and it behoves the Advocate of the *French* Generals to make a second Reflection on the Contents of his Letter.

I think enough has been said as to their Honour, which never yet obliged them to Fight, 'tis rather their Barbriety and Cruelty that keeps them so Tite to their Masters Interest; they are of the same Inhumane Temper with himself, and tho' they are Absolute Slaves to him if they can but get his Commission to Tyrannize over others, they are well enough Contented; they are little Tyrants under the Command of the great one; they are but the Executioners, the Hangmen in their Masters Service, and delighting in Blood, they esteem that an Honourable Post, which none but the most Abject Villain in *England* would accept of. What are *French* Governours, the Judges, the Intendants of the Provinces, but so many Depute Tyrants, or Land Pirates, that are Commissionated to Rob, Steal, Plunder, Murder and Massacre, at the Will of *Lewis*, or according to their own Discretionary Power?

Now, Honest *Country-man*, tho' the *French* Party accuses you of ill Manners, I am sure you have justly accused them of ill Principles. Our usage to Prisoners in *England*, is far better than ours find in *France*, where they won't allow 'em Christian Burial when they are Dead, nor any Comforts to their Souls while they are Living, and whatsoever *French* Party in *England* may say of your Rustick Carriage to the Generals, I am sure they are Civilly enough treated by the Government, and I'll be so bold to say, that they have more real Liberty now they are the Queen of *Englands* Prisoners, than when they were the *French* Kings Freemen, for in their own Country they are Slaves: Here they are but Prisoners, and even in that Station they are under the Protection of the good and wholesome Laws of this Realm, and no Man can do them an Injury but they may have Satisfaction of him at Law.

I shall conclude, with telling the Author of that Letter, that if he pleases to Vindicate the Honour of the *French* King or his Generals, I am ready to answer him. And so *Roger* good Night.

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